

2019 HELENA OPEN LANDS WORK PLAN

PRINCIPAL GOAL OF THE HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HOLMAC) WORK PLAN: To outline land management activities scheduled for implementation in the next 12 months. The work plan will be updated annually to address land management needs that have emerged as a result of input from the citizens of Helena, HOLMAC, and/or city staff. In accordance with the goals and objectives defined within the Helena Open Lands Management Plan, land stewardship activities shall be designed and implemented in a manner that will preserve, restore, and enhance the natural character of Helena's open lands and provide Helenian's with accessible natural open lands.

FOREST MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

D.N.R.C. – Community Forest Western Bark Beetle and Mt. Ascension Fuel Reduction Grants

- Complete 20 acres of slash pile burning.

D.N.R.C. - Mt. Ascension Forest Fuels Reduction Project

- Complete 20 acres of slash pile burning.
- Prepare and complete approximately 60 acres of forest fuel treatment work within Mt. Ascension Natural Park.
- Process all project closeout documentation.

D.N.R.C. – Mount Helena Fuels Reduction

- Complete 20 acres of slash pile burning.
- Prepare and complete approximately 100 acres of forest fuel treatment work on the north face of Mount Helena.
- Process all project closeout documentation.

U.S.F.S. – Participating Agreement (Capital 360)

- Prepare and complete approximately 60 acres of forest fuel and hazard tree treatment work on U.S.F.S. ownership in Grizzly Gulch.
- Prepare and complete approximately 200 acres of forestry maintenance work within the Open Lands system.

Forest Fuel Treatment Grants

- Complete applications as opportunities arise.

Forestry Visuals

- Remove retention tree and boundary identification flagging from all forestry projects completed to date.
- Respond to trash dumping and abandoned transient camps as needed.

Forestry Education

- Participate in community forestry outreach efforts as opportunities arise.

Firewood Distribution

- Harvest, forward, and process approximately 100 cords of firewood material for clients of the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP).
- Assist in the organization of volunteers involved in the splitting and distribution of accumulated firewood material during the January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 timeframe.

FACILITIES

- At the Van Hook Wetlands, in the northwest corner of the property, install an access trail (decomposed granite surface) that proceeds south from Silsbee Avenue for an approximate distance of 200 feet to a decomposed granite surfaced viewing platform that will be supported by a treated wood retaining wall.
- Install informational signs on the viewing platform.
- Facilitate the installation of two-four disc golf holes by Disc Golf Helena to be located in the SW corner of Govt. Lot 1, Section 4, T. 9 N., R. 3 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT (Donaldson Property).
- Install an informational kiosk adjacent to the SW corner of the Disc Golf Parking Area (Donaldson Property) near the intersection of Saddle Drive and Cabernet Drive intended for the display of a map of the Saddle Drive Disc Golf Course, Fire Danger Ratings and any additional information deemed necessary.

FENCE CONSTRUCTION & REMOVAL:

- Install approximately 2,000 feet of post and rail fencing on the western & southern borders of the SW ¼, Section 31, T. 10 N., R. 03 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT & the eastern side of the Little Moab Trail in the N1/2NE1/4SW1/4, Section 31, T. 10 N., R. 03 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT

- Install post and rail fence along approximately 550 feet of the northeastern corner boundary of the Donaldson property to detour persistent vehicular trespass activity.
- Install approximately 600 feet of post and rail fence in the SW corner of Govt. Lot 1, Section 4, T. 9 N., R. 3 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT (Donaldson Property).
- Identify sections of dysfunctional wire fence occurring upon City of Helena open lands properties and schedule removal.

BOUNDARY IDENTIFICATION:

- Verify open lands boundaries as budgets allow. Prioritize open lands boundary identification needs according to program of work and emerging management issues.
- Install boundary identification posts at approximate 100-foot intervals where encroachment situations are identified.

TRAIL IMPROVEMENT (PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF)

- Install a supportive structure on the downslope side of a rocky portion of the Aftershock Trail to retain fill material required to level the trail tread.
- Mechanically install rolling drainage dips with a skid steer machine on road (double track) sections of the Eagle Scout, Easy Rider, Meat Loaf & Catch Up trails to repair/prevent erosive gulying that occurs during the spring snowmelt and summer thunderstorm seasons.

RECLAMATION:

- Utilize a grass seed mixture containing one or more of the following native grasses: Slender wheatgrass (*Elymus trachycaulus* ssp. *trachycaulus*), Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis* variety Joeseeph or Nez Perce), Bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum* or *Pseudoroegenaria spicata* var Goldar)/
- Monitor previously seeded areas.
- Install post and rail fencing along that portion of the DeFord Trail situated below the Archery Range access road and immediately adjacent to several unauthorized earthen bike jumps located just east of the Dry Gulch draw bottom. Machine level the earthen jumps with a skid steer to discourage further development/use and seed disturbed areas with one or more of the aforementioned native grass seed species.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION/EXCHANGE:

Property Acquisition

- Assist in the completion of property acquisition grant applications as opportunities become available.
- Respond to public and partnership requests regarding potential purchase/sale/exchange of open lands properties.

WEED MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: (Code Enforcement Officer)

Public Education

- Coordinate groups for weed pulls throughout the summer. (PPLT Weed Social).
- Create a webpage educating public on the city's integrated pest management program and practices.
 - Include control method selection.
 - Information on biocontrol agents.
 - Weed identification stress importance on identifying new invaders early detection and eradication.
 - Grant opportunities available to property owners.
 - General information regarding herbicides and its effects on targeted plants such as some plant may flower but won't produce viable seed.
 - Post proposed annual treatment locations

Noxious Weed Treatment

- Monitoring/mapping
 - Visit set locations and identify weed infestations for treatment.
 - Train volunteers about mapping and monitoring techniques.
 - Setup mapping applications for volunteers to enter data.
- Herbicide
 - Treat approximately 150 acres or more based on annual funding amount.
 - Implement a targeted spot treatment program focusing on small infestations along high traffic corridors such as trails or trailheads.
 - Target fuel reduction units and pretreat if possible.
 - Prioritize high use access routes.
- Biocontrol:

- Participate in insects collections for Dalmatian Toadflax, Leafy Spurge, and Spotted Knapweed coordinated by the state bio control coordinator.
- Assist in monitoring of insect release sites for potential collection.
- Mark an additional 10-15 past release sites.
- Update insect release map and include newly marked sites.
- Weed pulls
 - Schedule and participate in weed pulls on open lands.
 - Look to continue the Department of Agriculture Adopt-A-Trailhead program
An example of this includes: The Old Shooting Range area was adopted by the Department of Agriculture in memory of Greg Ames. They guarantee to pull weeds 2 times a year)
 - Look to increase events per year with assistance of PPLT

TRAIL IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES: (Prickly Pear Land Trust)

- Powerline:
 1. Clean sediment traps & transfer accumulated material to eroded areas.
 2. Repair and reconstruct rock water-bars to aid pedestrian passage.
 3. Repair pedestrian damage caused by the bypass of rock water-bars and orient rock material to discourage excessive migration of the trail surface.
- No Trail:
 1. Clean sediment traps & transfer accumulated material to eroded areas.
 2. Enhance existing drainage features as deemed appropriate.
- Daisy Hill, Bitterroot Way, Quarry:
 1. Recruit soil material from adjacent terrain and fill/level eroded areas occurring within impacted trail segments.
 2. Install additional drainage features where deemed appropriate.
 3. Seed & reclaim segments of the trail that have been artificially widened by pedestrian traffic. Grass seed will be provided by the City.
- Old Chevy & Road to Mars:
 1. Recruit soil material from adjacent terrain and fill/level eroded areas occurring within impacted trail segments.
 2. Enhance existing drainage features as deemed appropriate.

- McKelvey & Dump:
 1. Clean sediment traps & transfer accumulated material to eroded areas.
 2. Recruit soil material from adjacent terrain and fill/level eroded areas occurring within impacted trail segments.
 3. Enhance existing drainage features as deemed appropriate.
- Lower Prospect Shafts:
 1. Clean sediment traps & transfer accumulated material to eroded areas.
 2. Recruit soil material from adjacent terrain and fill/level eroded areas occurring within impacted trail segments.
 3. Enhance existing drainage features as deemed appropriate.
- Ambrose:
 1. Seed & reclaim segments of the trail that have been artificially widened by pedestrian traffic. Grass seed will be provided by the City.
 2. Prune tree limbs that are obstructing the trail.
 3. Excavate and remove tree stumps located adjacent to the trail tread that are deemed to be a safety hazard.
- Swaney & Prairie:
 1. Seed & reclaim segments of the trail that have been artificially widened by pedestrian traffic.
Grass seed will be provided by City.
 2. Prune tree limbs that are obstructing the trail.
- Lower Prickly Pear:
 1. Clean sediment traps & transfer accumulated material to eroded areas.
 2. Recruit soil material from adjacent terrain and fill/level eroded areas occurring within impacted trail segments.
 3. Enhance existing drainage features as deemed appropriate.
- Bompart Connector:
 1. Widen trail segments that have developed a narrow tread width.
 2. Level trail segments that have excessively out-sloped surfaces.
 3. Enhance existing drainage features as deemed appropriate.

- Entertainment:
 1. Shape and configure that portion of the trail that is located downslope from its intersection with the aftershock Trail to effectively convert an old two track jeep trail into a single-track trail.
- Bull Run Trail (Gold Rush to California Portion):
 1. Transport and distribute decomposed granite material onto the trail surface by using wheelbarrows to transport and dump. City staff will stage the granitic material at a point on Gold Rush Avenue that is within close proximity to the intersection of the Bull Run Trail & Gold Rush Avenue.

Trail Sign Installation: (Prickly Pear Land Trust)

- Install 10 trail signs provided by City (\$75.00/Sign) as directed by the City of Helena.

Trail Stewards Volunteer Program: (Prickly Pear Land Trust)

- Proactively engage individuals and groups for participation.
- Produce an annual activity report for the Trail Stewards program and deliver the completed report to the City of Helena.

Mapping: (Prickly Pear Land Trust)

- South Hills Trail map update: Provide GPS data to City including trail re-routes and/or new trails, improved trails, parking areas, etc.

Miscellaneous Tasks: (Prickly Pear Land Trust)

- Coordinate volunteer activities (Workdays, Boy Scouts, Corporate and NGO's, Weed Pull events, etc.)
- Complete trail user counts, using electronic tally devices (Infrared & mountain bike), at the South Beattie Street Trailhead. Compile collected data and deliver an annual report (Trail Counter Report) that includes chronological line charts depicting monthly use organized by type (foot, bicycle), and trailhead. The delivered report shall include a narrative that outlines methodology, assumptions and any data irregularities that may have been noted.